

In Memory of Tarek



Tarek Meeting

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On 25th August, an event was held in memory of Tarek Chaiboub who was shot to death in Burngreave in July. Organised by the Cube Foundation, an independent Islamic Organisation, the meeting heard guest speakers Khadijah Ilyas, Sheik Zahir Mahmood from Birmingham and a statement from the father of Tarek Chaiboub.

No Soldiers, No Martyrs

Khadijah Ilyas, the mother of Ibrahim Ilyas who was shot dead 2 years ago, said:

"On Saturday 3rd June 2006 I had a phone call saying that my son had been shot and was in the Northern General Hospital. By the time I got there, Ibrahim was dead. This is something no family should have to deal with and I'd like to speak to the young people present."



Stop the violence

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"I've seen these tributes saying 'you are a martyr', 'you are a soldier'. These words are easy to say. They ease young people's consciences and make it easier to accept what has happened. You say 'soldier', 'martyr', but what cause were these young people really fighting for and killed over? Over words or over drugs. Your friend dies and you walk away, but what about the family?"

"These young people talk about friendship and loyalty, but what does this mean? – 'If you're my friend you'll pick up a knife and stab someone?' 'If you're loyal you'll pick up a gun and shoot someone?"

"There are no winners in this. The week before my son was killed he said to me: 'you don't need to worry about me, I'm with my friends. I'm always safe'. Ibrahim was shot dead in a car with 4 of his friends, but where are his friends now? Your loyalty is back to front, your loyalty should be to your parents."

Khadijah then held up a piece of paper, explaining that it was Ibrahim's death certificate and stated the cause of death as 'multiple gunshot wounds'. She added

"This is the reality. There are no martyrs, no soldiers. After someone dies you have to identify the body and prepare for the funeral. Which parent wants to wash the body of their dead son? This isn't

a joke or a game. If you are a real man and you have dispute, you'll walk away. I ask all of you to look at this very clearly."

Living in another world

A statement by Tarek's father was then read to the meeting:

"I would like to remind parents of this: We were living in one world and Tarek was living in another world with his friends. This way of life destroyed him, first spiritually and morally and then physically."

"Tarek escaped death once, but after 5 days recovering from the stabbing, we received news that Tarek's blood had been spilt again. They had finished the job they had started. There was a large security vacuum from the police – there was no initiative to protect him or his family."

"We are constantly mixing with other cultures and we need to respect each

other, Muslims shouldn't have hatred for anyone not even the killer. We must not take revenge, it will only bring more pain. Parents need to direct and guide their children and observe who they are with. We must bring up our children with good role models."

Love for material goods

Sheik Zahir Mahmood spoke next. Drawing on the words of the Prophet Mohammed, the Sheik spoke out against murder. Only Allah had the right to give and take life. A Muslim who kills a non-Muslim would never enter paradise. The Prophet defined a strong man as one who had control over himself when he was angry.

The Sheik regretted that many parents instil in our children the love for materialistic goods.

"We don't encourage our children to respect people on the basis of good character. >Parents don't have time to instil good character in their children."

The Sheik despaired of the fact that most of the drug dealers in his home town of Birmingham were Muslims, and stressed that Islam was not just about prayer and fasting but also wider conduct and activity in the community. He encouraged those assembled to take time out for their communities, to get young people off the street by organising football; martial arts and education classes.

Hope for the future

Khadijah gave the Messenger this tribute to her children:

"Over the last two years people have told me how strong I am. The truth is that my strength has come from the courage of my two children, Hanfia and Ta-heer."

"There was a great deal of anger, frustration and pain, and many tried to entice my younger son into giving the go ahead for retaliation."

Not once in the last two years have either of them talked of revenge, felt self-pity or tried to blame the world."

The pain of losing a dearly loved brother is evident every day, but they honour Ibrahim's memory by working hard at their education and staying on the path of their faith. They make me proud each and every day to have the honour of being their mother!"

One of the event organisers, Raheel Baig said:



RIP Bro

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"From the young people who attended we had an excellent response. Since the event we've been working with youth workers, teachers and the University of Sheffield Islamic Circle (USIC) to see how we can take things forward. We are trying to set up a mentoring scheme with the USIC to provide positive role models."

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